

The People- Powered Workplace

Empowering people and teams to be their best

Empowering people to reach their full potential with technology

We are entering an era of rapid workplace transformation and gaining the ability to maximize human potential as never before. Multigenerational workplaces, new patterns of teamwork and collaboration, and hybrid work models are becoming the norm in many industries. Location matters less. Work is becoming more digital—and everything moves faster. Technology pushes us harder as the pace of innovation accelerates, and businesses are now focused on finding the right tools to support these needs—inside the natural flow of work.

This e-book will cover how employee experience platforms (EXPs) are helping to modernize human resource (HR) processes by providing a foundation from which people and teams can reach their full potential. It will detail how EXPs can help organizations foster a more inclusive culture built around human connection, insight, purpose, and growth—and discuss how Microsoft and our partners are leading the way in bringing this vision to life.

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Empowering people and teams to
accomplish more together



When employees thrive,
organizations flourish

“Thriving employees are what will give organizations a competitive advantage in today’s dynamic economic environment.”

Satya Nadella

Chairman and CEO, Microsoft



For employees to thrive with hybrid work, leaders need to build a culture of trust and flexibility that enables people and organizations to continuously adapt to what’s next. This requires transforming traditional models of work and culture with tools that guide us to do more, be more, and achieve greater outcomes through an empowered workforce.

As technology becomes the new mechanism to improve the lived experience of employees, the changes are driving home the lesson that human productivity is not solely measured by engagement or efficiency.

Forward-thinking companies are investing in new employee experience (EX) strategies where well-being, team cohesion, and trust become the linchpins of success and the catalysts for creativity, innovation, and resilience.

The challenge is how to bring tools and capabilities together naturally, in the flow of everyday work, for an employee-first experience.

There are three areas of opportunity for leaders looking to build out their own integrated employee experience:

1. It starts with the needs of individuals and teams¹

Employee experience (EX) strategies empower individuals and teams to take ownership of their fulfillment, growth, and success, and elevate the impact of managers through learning, support, and privacy-protected insights. EX builds simple, repeatable habits and routines at all levels of the organization that lead to engagement and success at work. EX is about trust, transparency, caring, and empathy. It's about leadership, culture, growth, communities, and equity.¹

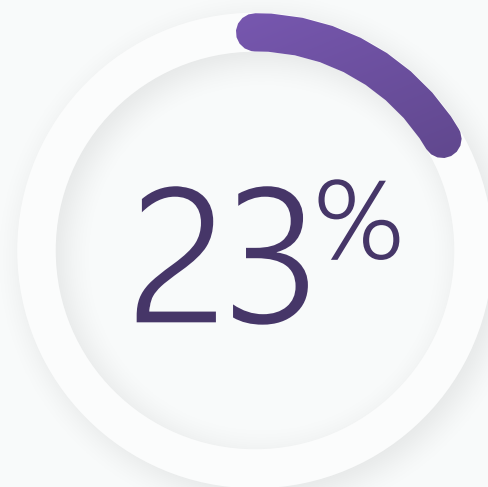
The best leaders will use EX to:

- Create better connection points, wherever, whenever, and however people work
- Prioritize learning and development to make it easier for employees to find their next growth opportunity
- Build simple, repeatable habits and routines at all levels of the organization that lead to engagement and success at work

2. Consistent, mission-first people investments improve business performance¹

A supportive culture plays a big role in transforming EX into an exercise of culture change. Prioritizing investments in people, irrespective of the business environment, is what brings more profit, more satisfied customers, and more engaged employees.

Focus on trust, transparency, inclusion, and care to lead with mission and purpose.



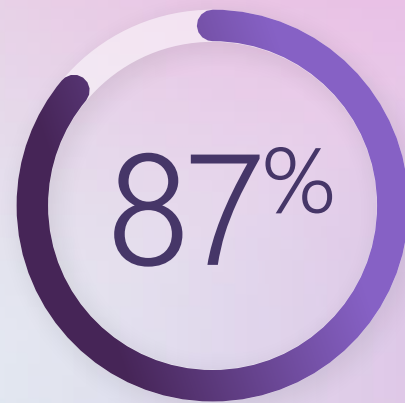
Organizations with highly engaged employees have 23 percent greater profitability.²

3. Excellence in EX directly leads to business outcomes

There are two pivots to consider for leaders looking to balance employee interests with the success of their organizations:

- **End productivity paranoia:**
85 percent of leaders say the shift to hybrid work has made it challenging to feel confident that employees are being productive.³ This mindset trickles down as a new form of “digital overwhelm,” and stress has soared under the pressure of employees trying to prove they are working.

To bridge the paranoia, leaders need to pivot from worrying about whether people are *working enough* to helping them focus on the *work that’s most important*.



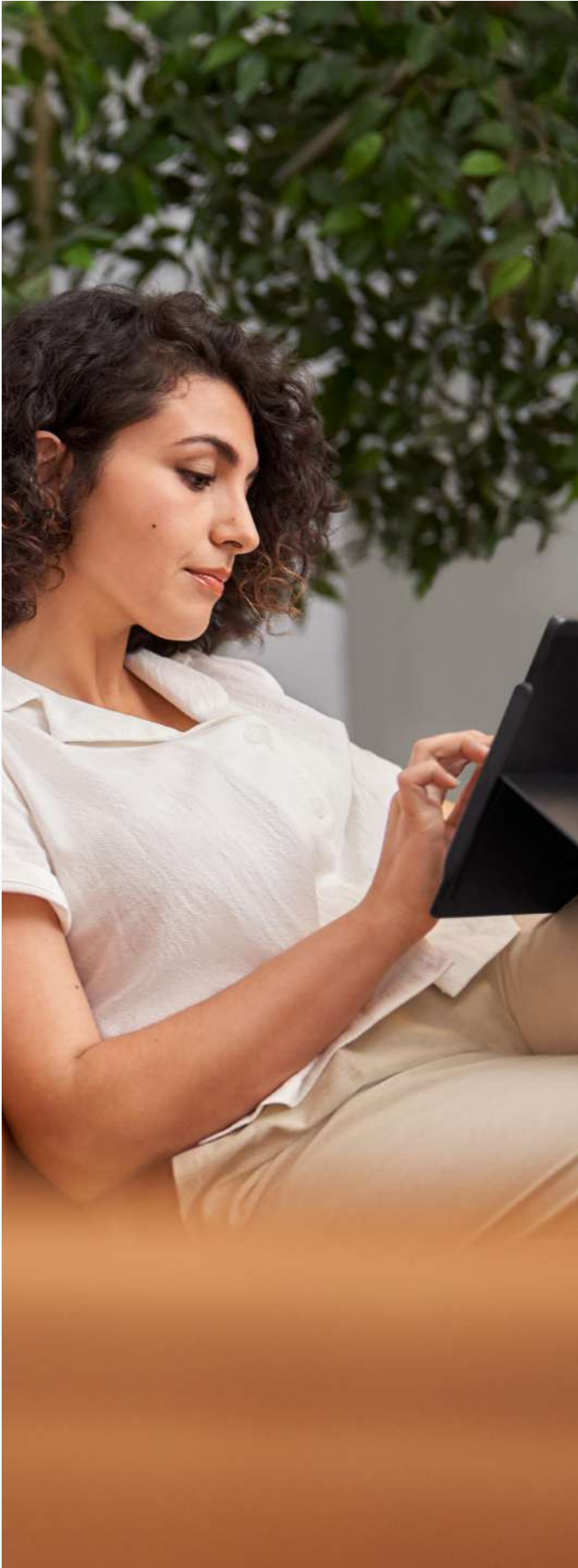
Employees report they are productive at work.



Leaders say they have full confidence their team is productive.

Survey respondents were asked, “On a typical day, how much do you agree or disagree with the following? ‘I feel productive when I work.’” Survey respondents in a leadership role were asked, “How much of a challenge is the following when thinking about new changes brought about by the shift to hybrid work? ‘Having confidence that my employees are being productive.’”

Source: [Hybrid Work Is Just Work. Are We Doing It Wrong?](#), Microsoft Work Trend Index Special Report, September 22, 2022.



- **Re-recruit your employees:**

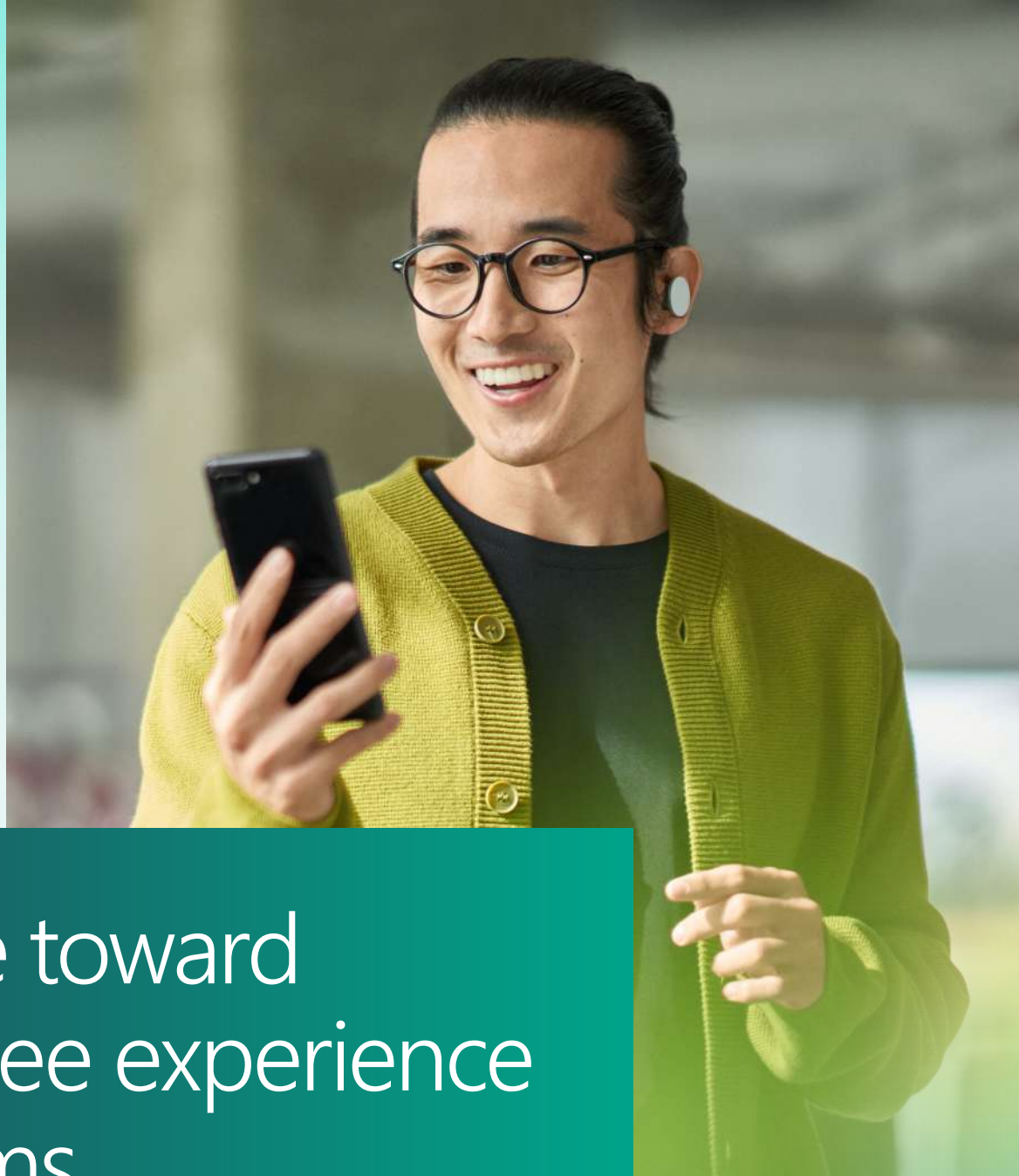
76 percent of employees say they'd stay at their company longer if they could benefit more from learning and development support—and the numbers rise even higher for business decision makers (+7).³ Prioritizing employee learning and growth presents a winning retention formula for organizations—or, alternately, if neglected, could pose an existential threat..

Ultimately, EX is not about tools, processes, systems, or efficiencies; rather, it's about the culture and the mission of a company. It allows organizations to take ownership of their growth and success, and elevates employees and teams through learning, support, and culture-driven insights.

¹ [The Definitive Guide: Employee Experience](#), Bersin, Josh, 2021.

² [The Powerful Relationship Between Employee Engagement and Team Performance](#), Gallup 2020.

³ [Hybrid Work Is Just Work. Are We Doing It Wrong?](#), Microsoft Work Trend Index Special Report, September 22, 2022.



A move toward
employee experience
platforms

Microsoft Viva is the first integrated employee experience platform (EXP) that helps every person in an organization connect, engage, learn, and grow no matter how or where they work. Viva brings together all the tools employees need to be successful in today's world of work into one unified solution that enables connection, insight, purpose, and growth.

Integrated EXPs like Viva build on leading EX strategies to spark meaningful connections between people at work and create work environments that are more satisfying and sustainable, and ultimately higher performing. Viva expands the EX mission to include balance, growth, and well-being, and creates virtuous cycles where the success of the individual fuels the success of the organization. It creates a system where companies flourish, when people thrive.

What makes Microsoft Viva unique?

Personalized, Data-Driven Insights	In-Flow	Trusted Platform
Viva is the only employee experience platform that fully taps the power of the Microsoft Graph to help you turn workplace data and insights into competitive advantage.	Viva's unique, integrated experiences work across Microsoft 365, Microsoft Teams, and third-party apps, so you can engage people naturally within the flow of their work.	Built on the Microsoft 365 Cloud, Viva is a secure, extensible platform for developing custom solutions for your business.

Viva is built right into Microsoft Teams and experienced through Microsoft 365, so employees can find what they need, when they need it. Viva is easily customizable and extensible, accessible from anywhere, and integrates with the tools that organizations already use.



Four elements to
a great employee
experience

CONNECTION

Creating a great employee experience has become more challenging than ever, and in this hybrid world people are feeling stressed, disconnected, or disengaged. A new approach is required where culture and employee experience can meet the needs of this distributed workforce.

Integrated EXPs like Microsoft Viva have stepped in to promote a more vibrant, connected, and inclusive workplace culture where information and knowledge flow freely, and everyone belongs. EXPs keep everyone included and collaborating more, to deliver results that help the organization grow and flourish.

Viva can strengthen workplace connections by building a communications and community platform, with an increase in employee retention emerging as one of the key business outcomes.





Microsoft Viva can:

- Help people discover relevant and personalized information, news, and resources through the apps they use every day—content powered by AI and Microsoft Graph, as well as information from Viva Goals and Viva Topics, across Microsoft 365
- Create communities and places to connect, where anyone can exchange ideas to keep employees informed, invested, and inspired
- Facilitate a two-way dialogue between employees and leaders and foster open discussion and knowledge sharing among employees across departments, geographies, and languages
- Connect and engage workers with the right tools, people, and information they need to do their best work

Organizations with a focus on connection are 87 percent more likely to make better decisions¹ and 75 percent faster at bringing products to market.¹

Take the example of Blum²—a family-run furniture fitting company using Viva to centralize company news, tasks, and conversations, to give workers a consistent brand connection that they can access from anywhere. “This isn’t just about one-way communication,” says Sarah Blum, employer branding and recruiting specialist at Blum. “We think about the direction we want to go together, [and] we’re better [at] engaging employees and showing them that they’re working together as part of something big.”²

Microsoft Viva allows decision makers to consider a new set of leadership tools to engage directly with their employees, and can create places of connection that support the merging of perspectives and deepening of relationships.

Viva can simplify an employee’s day with an integrated and personalized dashboard, and can tailor the experience to specific employee groups, roles, or geographies, so that individuals and organizations can become better versions of themselves.

¹ [“The Importance of Inclusion in the Workplace,”](#) Korn Ferry.

² [“Blum: A Trusted Company in a New Era,”](#) Microsoft Customer Stories, November 23, 2021.



INSIGHT



The ability to unlock real-time insights and actionable recommendations can help everyone in the organization to work smarter and stay focused—especially in a hybrid world that has made it difficult for managers and leaders to gauge how employees are doing.

And this becomes business critical in the quest for increased productivity, employee engagement, and employee retention.

The Microsoft Work Trend Index report shows that only 43 percent of employees confidently say their company solicits employee feedback at least once a year—meaning over half of companies (57 percent) may rarely, if ever, ask and hear about their employees' experience at work.¹

Data can also help leaders augment knowledge about how people feel, with insights about how people work. This holistic view on the overall EX gives managers greater visibility into organizational health, which can help senior leaders address complex cultural challenges. Managers can use the data to identify the impact of hybrid work on people and their business, to set up new team plans for healthier work habits.

Strong, actionable insights can lead to a healthy balance of productivity and well-being. For example, PayPal—powered by Microsoft Viva and with the commitment of their leadership—was able to use advanced tools and integrations to perform deeper analysis, address complex challenges, and respond quickly to change.



*"I think approaching the deep questions that shape how we run our business opened the door for us to adopt Viva Insights to get a better understanding of employee behavior," says Dan Torunian, vice president of employee technology and experiences at PayPal. "Being able to get that quantifiable pulse on the workforce allows us to pivot quickly and make appropriate accommodations."*²

Microsoft Viva allows managers and leaders to harness the power of workplace analytics and listening tools to understand what programs are working well and identify areas for improvement. In addition to getting employee feedback from organization-wide surveys, managers can now seek quick, ongoing feedback on their team's experience with research-backed templates designed to drive team success.

Managers can use data to identify team collaboration norms that can lead to burnout and transform that data into action for lasting impact, setting up team plans to help foster healthy work habits.



Microsoft Viva can:

- Give individuals personalized insights and nudges to help them stay focused, productive, and mindful throughout the day
- Help managers identify and address opportunities to reduce burnout and increase productivity
- Understand the impact of hybrid work on people and the business
- Address the challenges important to businesses with advanced tools and custom insights

Viva ensures that decisions are driven by the most up-to-date information and allows leaders to consistently take a pulse on how their employees are doing, with timely, actionable insights crucial to maintaining a competitive edge.

¹ [Hybrid Work Is Just Work. Are We Doing It Wrong?](#), Work Trend Index Special Report, September 22, 2022.

² ["PayPal Unlocks Workplace Data, Improves Employee Well-Being with Microsoft Viva Insights,"](#) Microsoft Customer Stories, January 31, 2022.

PURPOSE



Recent events have permanently altered what people expect from their jobs. Flexibility, inclusion, and a clear sense of purpose are now non-negotiables, and employees are hungry for a more *human deal*.

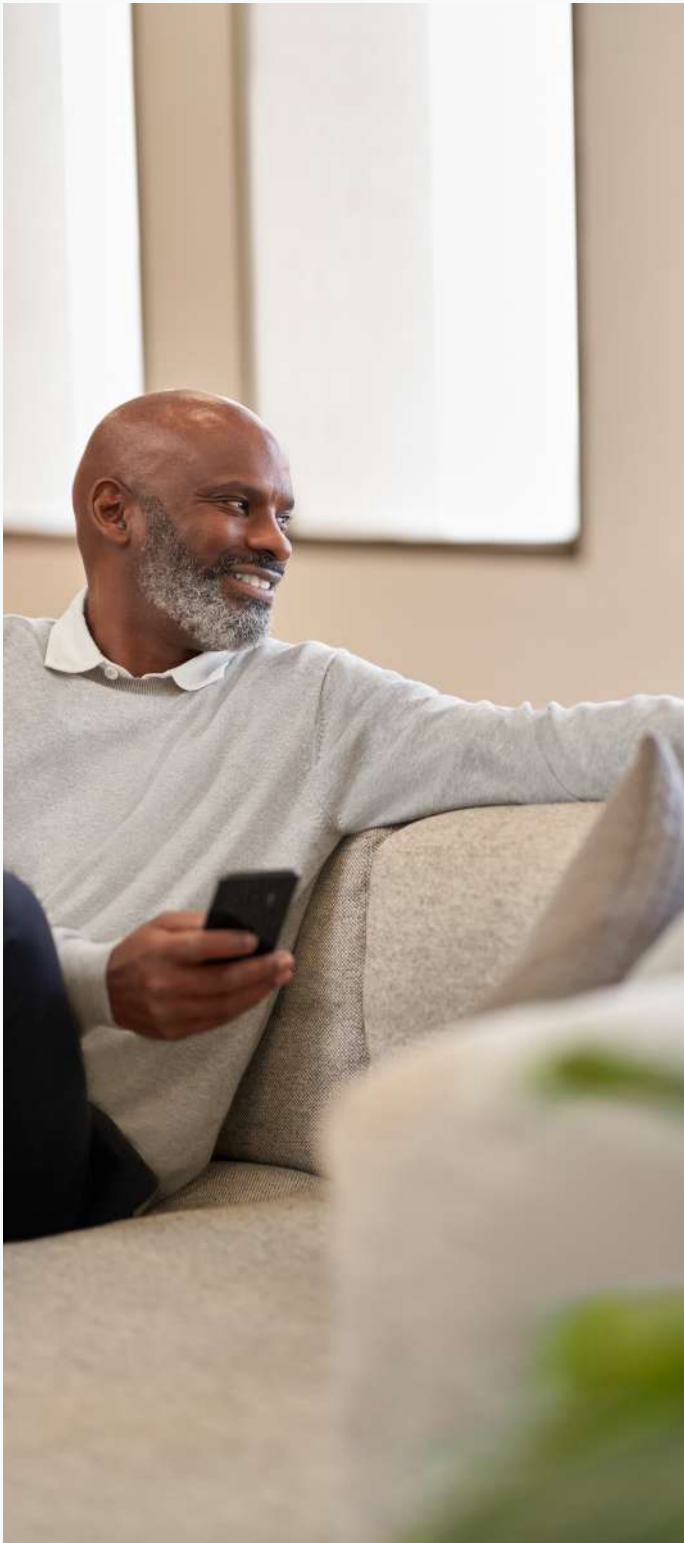
Today, with proven value and buy-in from senior leadership, teams across Microsoft are realizing value from EX tools like objectives and key results (OKRs).

OKRs offer a proven goal-setting framework for creating alignment, sharpening focus, and building a highly productive and engaged work culture.

“Especially at the individual contributor level, OKRs have helped people see how the work that we do directly impacts our business strategy and our business objectives.”

Maryleen Emeric Leal

Chief of Staff, Microsoft Modern Work marketing organization¹



EXPs like Microsoft Viva are bringing greater goal clarity and alignment at scale, as well as providing employees with increased visibility into organizational goals and priorities.

Viva can:

- Clarify and align goals across the organization so people know how to succeed together
- Boost individual and team performance in every department with personalized learning and role-based targeted training
- Give people simple, intuitive ways to find and share knowledge and best practices
- Increase collaboration and meeting effectiveness

Not surprisingly, Viva's effect on employee retention can be significant, with employees having greater role or work clarity:

- 3.95x as likely to say they plan to stay at the company for at least two years²
- 7.1x as likely to say they rarely think about looking for a new job²
- 4.5x as likely to say they're happy at their current company²



Microsoft Viva helps to better understand individual impact by setting objectives and key results that funnel into core cultural priorities. Viva improves on a key productivity insight by helping prepare for the day and week ahead, with valuable signals that improve work patterns via a personalized daily briefing email. Viva helps to align people and projects to strategic business priorities, set clear goals, and empower people and teams to accomplish more together.

OKRs allow anyone in the organization to see the bigger picture through clear objectives and prioritizing key results to improve employee experience. They break down silos through shared objectives, balance flexibility and consistency, and serve as a source of empowerment for teams and individuals.

¹ [Hybrid Work Is Just Work. Are We Doing It Wrong?](#), Work Trend Index Special Report, September 22, 2022.

² ["Focus and Alignment: How Microsoft Uses OKRs to Achieve Business Goals."](#) Microsoft Customer Stories, May 16, 2022.

GROWTH

Investing in learning and knowledge has become a core part of the strategy to retain and cultivate the best talent, which is especially important in a competitive market that has accelerated since the pandemic. EXPs like Microsoft Viva can develop and retain top talent by giving people the right content, information, and connections they need to grow at every stage of their career.

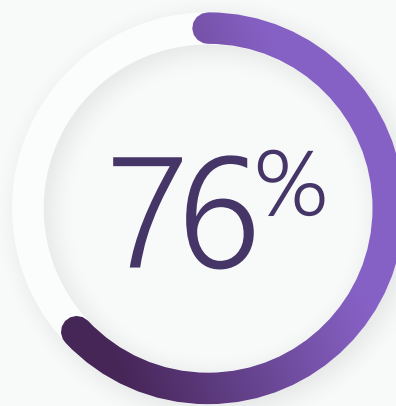
Companies and leaders that provide cutting-edge development tools demonstrate their interest in attracting and nurturing talent from within, and for them, it's about empowering their employees to choose their own paths with the right content, information, and connections to expand impact at every stage of the career map.



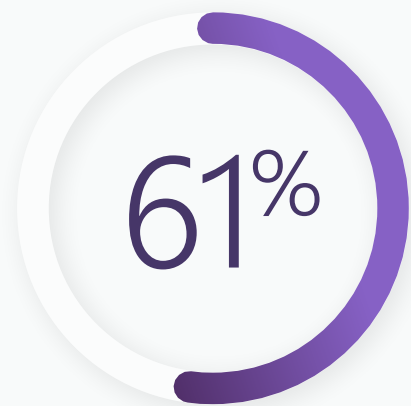
There are, however, clear barriers to the growth/learning potential: a shortage of time, difficulty in prioritization, and the lack of high-quality learning content. These are key blockers affecting both onboarding and retention. And this is highlighted by the Microsoft Work Trend Index report,¹ which shows that:



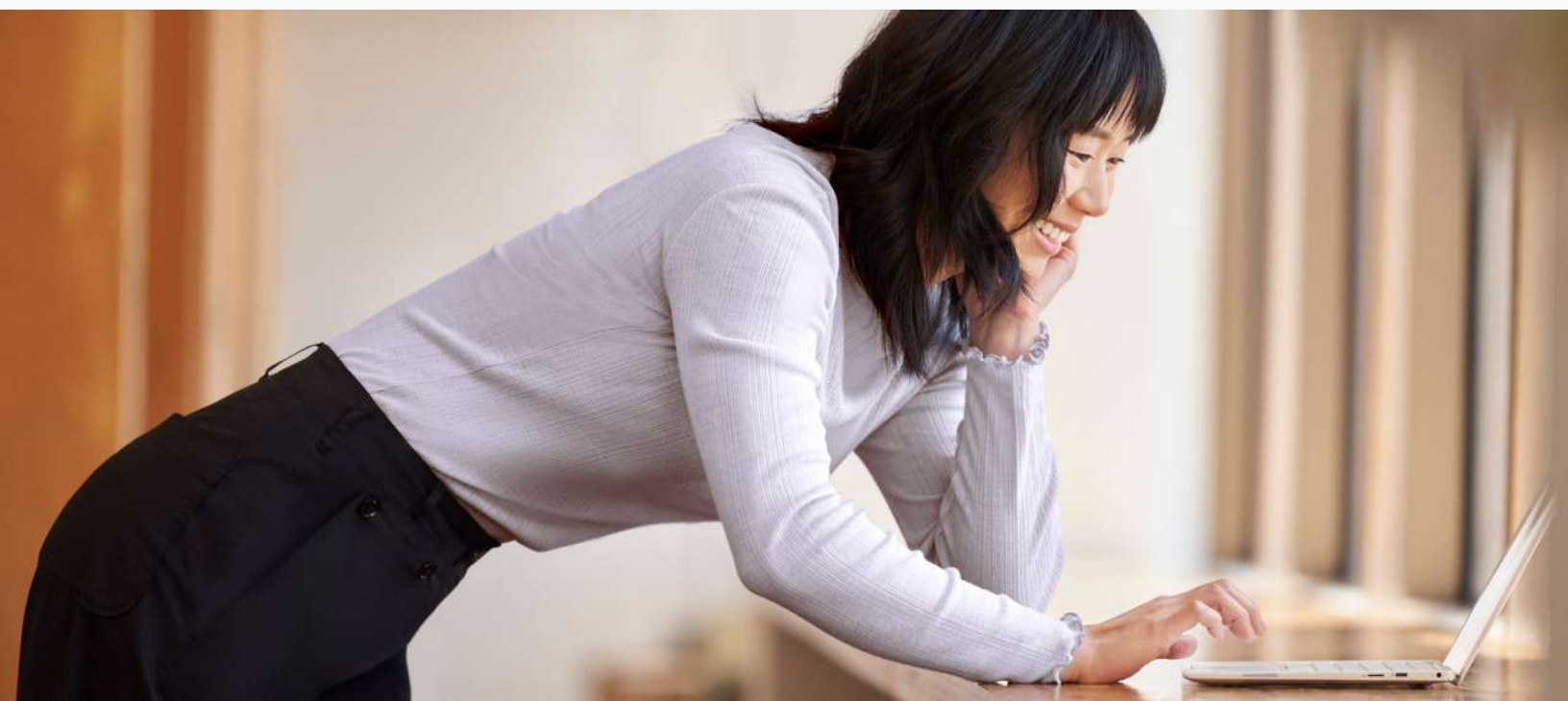
56 percent of employees and 68 percent of business decision makers say there are not enough growth opportunities in their company to make them want to stay long term



76 percent of employees say they'd stay at their company longer if they could benefit from more learning and development support



61 percent of employees would be more engaged with learning if it was intertwined throughout their work platforms



"To stay competitive, we must be a more responsive organization that's known for listening to and supporting employees."²

Lorna Stubbs

Chief Human Resources Officer, Music Tribe

Microsoft Viva is uniquely set up to contribute to every stage of the employee life cycle:

- Streamlining new-hire and new-to-role onboarding so people can ramp up quickly and thrive
- Inspiring learning and growth by offering curated courses and reskilling assignments—making it easy to learn on the job by helping employees easily find the knowledge, resources, and expertise they need to succeed
- Boosting individual and team performance in every department with personalized learning and role-based targeted training
- Fostering individual and organizational growth through networking, mentorships, and communities





With features like Answers in Microsoft Viva and Organizational Knowledge Graph, Viva taps into the power of AI to reason over organizational content and automatically identify, process, and organize information into easily accessible knowledge. Viva can provide real-time answers to critical questions that match employee questions to answers and experts across the organization, to help put collective knowledge to work for all employees. Viva enables experts to share and refine knowledge through curated topic pages and topic cards, which are automatically generated and updated by AI and surfaced across Microsoft 365.

Ultimately, by aligning people and projects to strategic business priorities, Viva can help organizational leaders set clear goals, and empower people and teams to accomplish more together.

¹ [Hybrid Work Is Just Work. Are We Doing It Wrong?](#), Work Trend Index Special Report, September 22, 2022.

² ["Music Tribe Tunes In to a Culture of Learning with Microsoft Viva Learning."](#) Microsoft Customer Stories, September 12, 2022.



Empowering people and
teams to accomplish
more together



Amplifying culture, harnessing the power of new EX capabilities, and maximizing human potential as never before

When people are happy and inspired, they create their best work. They think and perform better, collaborate more, and deliver results that help the organization grow, flourish, and outperform the competition.

Microsoft Viva can spark meaningful connections between people at work and help individuals in organizations become better versions of themselves.

Viva brings together a wide range of EX capabilities in the flow of everyday work, and can take a pulse on the insights and analytics, increase employee productivity and engagement, and improve the processing of services and benefits.

Data from Forrester's Total Economic Impact™ (TEI) study¹ shows a 327 percent ROI with Microsoft Viva over the course of three years with key benefits of:

- Reducing onboarding time to full productivity by 50 percent
- Improving productivity via a 75 percent reduction in content- and expert-discovery effort
- Enhancing employee satisfaction and well-being and reducing employee attrition by 20 percent
- Improving business outcomes and incremental revenue

With Viva, people can hone their skills and discover new ones. Managers can gain data-driven insights that help them make better decisions. And ultimately, organizations can build an inclusive, thriving culture where everyone is empowered to achieve their full potential.

[Learn more about Microsoft Viva](#)

¹ Results are for a composite organization based on interviewed customers. [The Total Economic Impact™ of Microsoft Viva](#), a commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting, September 2022.